

# Telework

- Work arrangement in which an employee regularly performs officially assigned duties at home or other worksites geographically convenient to the residence of the employee.
- Is an innovative management option, not an employee entitlement.
- Working away from the office at least 20 percent of each pay period

## Legislative and Agency Mandates

- **Public Law 106-346 dated October 23, 2000**, states that each executive agency shall establish a policy under which eligible employees of the agency may participate in telecommuting to the maximum extent possible without diminished employee performance.
- **Public Law 109-108, Science, State, Justice, Commerce, and Related Agencies Appropriation Act 2006, enacted November 22, 2005, Section 619** of that law states that NASA shall, not later than 2 months after the date of the enactment of this Act, certify that telecommuting opportunities are made available to 100% of the eligible workforce. Upon certification, \$5,000,000 in appropriations will be released to NASA. NASA must submit certification to Congress by January 22, 2006. Additionally, the law requires that NASA provide quarterly reports to the Committee on Appropriations on the status of teleworking programs, including the number of NASA employees eligible for, and participating in telework programs.
- **Personnel Bulletin 2005-43-JL dated December 16, 2005** required installations to certify in writing by January 18, 2006 that teleworking opportunities have been made available to 100% of Center's eligible workforce. Headquarters was required to submit certification to Congress by January 22, 2006 to get added appropriations.

## Legislative and Agency Mandates (continuation)

- **Personnel Bulletin 2007-19-JL dated May 8, 2007** revised NASA's guidance on recording eligible Federal employees for telework in WebTADS. OPM guidance require agencies to report all employees as eligible for telework either on a regular and recurring basis or on an occasional, non-routine basis, unless there is a business reason for an exception.
- **Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee** approved bill, S. 1000 dated November 14, 2007, that makes all federal employees eligible to telework unless they fall under categories that would prohibit teleworking.

## TELEWORK BENEFITS- What's In It For Supervisor

- Compliance with Legislative mandate to implement telework to the maximum extent possible
- Human Capital Management Tool:
  - Flexibility managers can use to attract, recruit and retain the best possible workforce
  - Help employees manage and reduce annual commuting time and save on gas as well as other work/life stressors
  - Reasonable accommodation for disability
  - Help make employees more effective in their job and help with continuity of work
- Environmental Improvements by reducing traffic congestion, emissions, and infrastructure impact in urban areas
- Tax Dollars - saves taxpayer dollars by decreasing Government real estate costs
- Emergency Response – by integrating telework fully into an organization's operations and culture can help maintain critical functionality in the event of national or local emergency
- Helps with continuity of work

## Telework Options

Per Office of Personnel Management (OPM) guidance and NASA policy, all employees must be reported as eligible for telework, either on a regular and recurring basis or on an occasional, non-routine basis, unless there is a business based reason for an exception.

- **Core**

- Follows a recurring schedule in which the employee teleworks one or more days a week.

- **Episodic**

- Consists of short periods of off-site work to complete a specific task or when commuting arrangements are disrupted by a national or local emergency
  - Allows employees with a certain illness, disability, or temporary medical condition, who have the approved medical documentation, to work from home.

**NOTE:** MSFC Telework Application and Agreement (MSFC Form 4292) is required when core or episodic option is activated.

## **Telework Options (Continuation):**

### **Ineligible - business based exceptions:**

- Position requires, on a regular and recurring basis, direct handling of secure materials
- Employee performs on-site activities that cannot be conducted remotely or at an alternate worksite
- Employee's last performance appraisal rating of record is below fully successful or the employee's conduct has resulted in disciplinary action within the last year.

## **Web-based Time and Attendance System (WebTADS)**

- NASA's time and attendance reporting system, WebTADS, has been modified to record and report telework eligibility and specific telework arrangements.
- Supervisors must record eligibility determinations (core, episodic, or ineligible) on the "leave balance" page of the employee's timesheet.
- Approvers have capability to edit employee telework attributes (option, begin/end dates)
- Center Telework Coordinator can view all employee profiles (cannot view timesheet) to edit telework options, the beginning and ending date, as well as view reports on Center telework tracking.

## **WebTADS Changes Effective 10/3/07**

- Eligible category will be removed
- If an employee is eligible they must be set to an option of "Episodic or Core"
- Any employee set to "Eligible" during release on 10/3/07 will be automatically changed to "Episodic" and begin/end dates will not be required.
- New employees will default to "Episodic"
- NASA's policy states that all employees are considered eligible for telework unless they are determined to be ineligible based on the OPM criteria.
- Employees set to "Ineligible" must have basis of ineligibility selected or error will occur on employee leave balance page



## **How to be an Effective Telework Supervisor**

**Comply with legislation by being committed to using telework to the fullest extent possible**

**Know your telework coordinator who can assist you in ensuring Agency and Center policy and procedures are properly applied and ensure you are aware of support and resources available to you**

**Consider each assigned positions and determine whether there is any potential to create a telework opportunity.**

**Evaluate employee requests for telework participation in a fair and equitable manner, ensure restrictions or denials are based on sound business or mission related criteria**

**Understand and assess the needs of your organization and strategically approve or disapprove a telework request based on the needs and work of the group and not on a first-come, first served basis, base denials on business based reasons**

**Allow employees, when possible, to participate in the process to help formulate possible solutions to issues that may arise**

**Create Signed Telework Agreements -Ensure the Telework Application and Agreement (MSFC Form 4292) is documented properly, outlining the terms and conditions of the telework arrangement prior to commencement of a telework arrangement.**

**Telework agreements are living documents and should be revisited by the supervisor and employee and re-signed regularly, at least once a year when changes occur**

## **How to be an Effective Telework Supervisor (continuation)**

**Establish communication requirements, performance expectations and progress. The telework agreement provides the framework for this discussion.**

**Remain equitable in assigning work and rewarding performance and avoid distributing work based on "availability" as measured by physical presence and avoid the pitfall of assuming someone who is present and looks busy is actually accomplishing more work than someone who is not on-site. Good performance management practices are essential for telework to work effectively and equitably.**

**Make good decisions about equipment, accessibility to records or reference materials, consideration should be based on the work of the employee, Agency security requirements and budget constraints.**

**Ensure telework employees protect and safeguard sensitive and confidential information and obtain supervisory approval if data is used or accessed off-site. Ensure return of materials used or created at the alternative worksite.**

**Communicate with the teleworker regarding emergencies to ensure the employee is informed of dismissals or closure procedures.**

**Facilitate communication with all members of the workgroup, teleworkers and non-teleworkers regarding telework arrangements to include coverage, communication, and responsibilities**

**Practice, practice, practice as the success of an organization's telework program depends on regular, routine use.**

**Experience is the only way to enable supervisors, employees, IT support, and other stakeholders to work through any technology, equipment, communications, workflow, and associated issues that may inhibit the transparency of remote work**

## Employee Responsibilities

- **Conduct an honest self assessment about their telework capabilities – what work is portable, ability to work independently without close supervision, comfort with technology, good communication with supervisor and co-workers, dependent care for instance**
- **Comply with the procedural requirements of MPR**
- **Complete Telework Application and Agreement and submit to supervisor for approval prior to commencing telework**
- **Work with supervisor to overcome problems or obstacles to work situations as they occur in order that the work of the organization is accomplished**
- **Comply with NASA policies for information technology security, records, use of government equipment and use of telephones**
- **Adhere to the terms and conditions outlined in the Telework Application and Agreement**
- **Ensure personal disruptions such as non-business telephone calls and visitors are kept to a minimum**
- **Suggest to their first level supervisor if modifications are necessary to the Telework Application and Agreement**
- **Perform an assessment of the alternative worksite and answer required questions on the self-certification safety checklist**

## OHC Responsibilities

- **Administer, monitor, and make necessary modification to the Telework Program.**
- **Provide Program Orientation via the OHC website and ensure other training mandated for a successfully is implemented.**
- **Provide daily advice and guidance to managers and employees on the appropriate use of telework.**
- **Maintain original copies of the MFSC Form 4292**
- **Prepare and maintain Telework Program status reports.**

## BOTTOM LINE-SUPERVISORS

- **Supervisors MUST:**
  - Implement routine telework in their organization to the fullest extent possible
  - Treat employees equitably and fairly in implementing telework in their organization
  - Identify eligible and ineligible employees using established Agency criteria
  - Include telework in COOP and other emergency response planning
  - Review safety checklist with teleworkers
  - Thoroughly review all telework agreements to ensure compliance with Agency information security policies
  - Work with employees to develop secure systems for potentially sensitive documents and other materials
  - Track removal and return of potentially sensitive materials
  - Enforce personal privacy requirements for records
  - Enforce time and attendance regulations and deal with problems as they arise
- **Supervisors MUST NOT:**
  - Under normal circumstances, require that an employee work from home
  - Terminate a telework agreement for reasons other than business or performance reasons
- **Supervisors MAY:**
  - Require an employee to work at an alternative worksite within the employee's commuting area
  - Terminate a telework agreement for business reasons (poor performance or a change in the nature of the work)

## BOTTOM LINE - TELEWORKER

- **Teleworkers MUST:**
  - Comply with the security and telework policies of the Center and Agency
  - Take responsibility for ensuring the success of their arrangement
  - Notify the supervisor of any changes in their situation that may affect the arrangement
  - Address safety issues while teleworking from a home office
  - Complete the information systems security training and achieve technical proficiency to implement required measures
  - Provide a high level of security to any personal or private information accessed at the telework site or transported between locations
  - Comply with time and attendance regulations and account for time accurately
- **Teleworkers MAY NOT:**
  - Assume a telework arrangement is permanent
  - Use telework as a substitute for child or other dependent care
- **Teleworkers MAY:**
  - Use appropriate grievance procedures if they believe their telework request or agreement was wrongfully denied or terminated. Telework requests or agreements may be denied or terminated only for business reasons, and managers must provide written justification to the affected employee

## CY07 Quarterly Telework

	<u>Center</u>	<u>Apvd Participants</u>	<u>Core</u>	<u>Episodic</u>	<u>Eligible Category</u>
Qtr 1	2531	386	55	247	84
Qtr 2	2557	1345	53	1,250	42
Qtr 3	2551	2536	42	2494	0
Qtr 4	2558	2542	43	2499	0